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THE WASHINGTON POST

Officials Eye Revealing Data On Soviet Arms

Backing Is Sought For Reagan Buildup

By David Hoffman
Washington Post Staff Writer

The administration, seeking to enhance public support for President Reagan's defense buildup and to counter the nuclear freeze movement, is considering stepped-up public disclosure of secret intelligence data on Soviet military capabilities, officials said yesterday.

One example of this is expected to occur Wednesday, when the Pentagon publishes a two-year update on Soviet military power. Officials said other such steps are under study.

In particular, some administration officials said they would like to make public a classified briefing by the Defense Intelligence Agency that has been shown to some members of Congress and is described as "very effective."

"What I would like to do is put that on national television in living color," said one official. However, no formal proposal has yet been made to President Reagan on such a release of intelligence data, officials added.

The talk of declassifying some U.S. intelligence data comes on the eve of a key committee vote in the House on a nuclear freeze resolution and of planned demonstrations on Capitol Hill for and against the freeze.

The president opposes the nuclear freeze on grounds that it would lock the United States into an inferior military position relative to the Soviets.

The idea of declassifying more information also comes at a time of apparent



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Among the Peace Through Strength group after seeing the president are Rep. Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.), left, John M. Fisher of the American Security Council and Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.).

disagreement in the intelligence community about the scope of Soviet defense expansion.

Richard Burt, assistant secretary of state for European affairs, told the House Foreign Affairs Committee yesterday that there is an "analytical debate under way in the intelligence community" about the scope and nature of Soviet military expansion.

But Reagan expressed little doubt in remarks yesterday to a conservative group seeking to build public support for his Pentagon budget.

"The Soviet military buildup has increased without letup for over a decade," Reagan told the National Coalition for Peace Through Strength, according to White House spokesman Larry Speakes.

Insisting on the need for his arms modernization effort, Reagan added, "We know the Soviets would not negotiate seriously unless they see such United States programs like the MX [intercontinental ballistics missile] and the Pershing [intermediate range missile] deployment actually under way."

But Reagan did not mean to suggest that an arms control agreement with the Soviets would have to wait until after the Pershing II missile deployment in west-

ern Europe begins in December, officials said.

The president was urged by the group to declassify more secret intelligence data to counter the nuclear freeze movement and turn around what polls show to be flagging public support for the president's defense buildup.

"The president is probably the best salesman that I know, but in order to sell something you have to present some facts," said Rep. William L. Dickenson (Ala.), ranking Republican on the House Armed Services Committee. "We feel very strongly that the facts have not been presented, that the American people are denied facts on which to base good judgment." He said, for example, that the administration should declassify materials about the accuracy of Soviet nuclear missiles.

Late yesterday, Reagan met on the defense budget with Senate Majority Leader Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.), Senate Budget Committee Chairman Pete V. Domenici (R-N.M.), and Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger. The president is scheduled to meet with Weinberger today to review the revised administration publication, "Soviet Military Power."

The Washington Times

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 1983 / PAGE 5A

Soviet Caribbean threat stressed by White House

By Whit Flora
WASHINGTON TIMES STAFF

Seeking to bolster its request for \$1.1 billion in aid to El Salvador, the Reagan administration yesterday claimed the Soviet Union and Cuba are making major new efforts to export revolution in the Caribbean.

In support of its case, the Defense Department said about \$1 billion in Soviet military aid went to Cuba last year. Defense officials also released photographs showing that Cuba has constructed a large airfield on the island of Grenada.

Meanwhile, Senate Democratic Minority Leader Robert Byrd, D-W.Va., said he will join a move to block the aid package until the United States pressures the El Salvador government into negotiating with leftist guerrillas and establishing free elections.

The administration's proposal was taken before the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by Fred C. Ikle, an undersecretary of defense. He argued that the United States must move in the Caribbean because "the military strength that the Soviets and Cubans have assembled in the region is quite adequate to turn Central America

into another Eastern Europe."

Ikle said several factors call for more U.S. aid:

- In 1982, the Soviets delivered 68,000 tons of arms to Cuba, worth about \$1 billion. That was up from 63,000 tons in 1981, he said.

- The number of Soviet military advisers in Cuba increased by 20 percent last year, up to 2,500. That means, Ikle said, "Soviet military advisers in Cuba outnumber U.S. military advisers in all of the Latin American by countries by 25 to one."

- Cuba has been building a major airfield at Point Salines on Grenada, a Caribbean island. "Coupled with other support facilities, the airfield will significantly increase Cuban and Soviet capabilities to extend their reach in the Caribbean, Latin America and Africa."

Ikle was joined by Thomas O. Ender, the assistant secretary of state responsible for Latin American policy.

"There is a concerted effort by Nicaragua and Cuba, backed by the U.S.S.R., to unite, train and arm violent insurgent movements, turning them into instruments for the destruction of established governments," Ender said.

Ender's comment came a day after

the Salvadoran guerrilla movement admitted that it has been supplied by the Cubans for a "long time."

Meanwhile, opposition to the aid plan was developing among Democrats, with Byrd announcing his disapproval by saying, "It is my impression that the guerrillas would be willing to enter into negotiations leading to a free election if indeed it were to be a free election."

He was joined by Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, and Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, a presidential contender.

Under congressional rules, President Reagan can spend \$60 million of the \$1.1 billion aid package without approval of Congress — unless Congress specifically moves to kill that "reprogramming" money Reagan wants to switch from other areas.

That action can be taken with a subcommittee vote, and Rep. Clarence Long, D-Md., chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, has said the additional aid will be blocked unless the administration meets several conditions.

One condition he wants is participation in Salvadoran elections by exiled opposition groups.



New airfield on Caribbean island of Grenada includes barracks, storage and 10,000-foot runway for larger aircraft.

Department of Defense photo